

in oklahoma in july in 1965 a large lake surging
having housed for the summer the bodies of people
bathing
turned suddenly from blue to green for my benefit
i mention this
equally astounding observation coincidentally

in london in october in 1878 a naturalist walking
was followed at his heel by a cubeshaped animal silently
crowds of people of all shapes followed him to his
home crying
such words as best expressed their anger and fear

in oklahoma in july in 1965 a woman walking
was followed and preceded by a twolegged boy loudly
who
left the ground entirely in the air or became a
moving part of a tree
at irregular intervals i believe but i had no watch
to time them

and this morning the earth squeezed out of its rim
a yellow egg
and the air of the sky that i cannot hold turned into
water
and a strange black box of a machine makes black
marks on paper
out of weightless golden questions in my mind.

thursday evening

we all sat around in a circle
one said have you heard about
the two drowned russian astronauts in wisconsin
that the government refuses to take out of a lake

i said what lake in wisconsin
nobody knew

another said i read in the readers digest
about the two young boys in italy who have built
a radar tracking device out of tin cans thats better
than any the russian and american scientists have made

i said what are their names
nobody knew

another said i know a man who talked to a fellow
who was minding his own business when one day a flying
saucer
landed beside him and a deep voice said get in he got in
there was just a microphone there
the spaceship flew him to washington and back in eleven
minutes

i said where is the fellow now
nobody knew

thats nothing said another did you know that our
scientists
have invented antigravity machines that can go to space
and back in minutes only theyre just about two or three
feet wide
not big enough to hold a man

i said have you seen one
no he said

when we went home i said to my wife arline
how much of that stuff do you believe none really she
said
i said i never heard such a lot of phony stories myself
driving carefully through the traffic of angels and
unicorns
some of whom had been drinking.

charles fort

out of the somewhere a rain of blood
dripped for days on the dry earth while indoors
with shades drawn
sat seven scientists
in weighty debate on its impossibility

poor peasants watched in wonder
the great bird on the moon or else
its visible shadow, while in conference
sat seventy sages
calculating copernican cycles

toads and crabs and chunks of ice
were released entirely at random
from the afterports of the great spaceship
while seven hundred savants
predicted tomorrows weather